



WESTBROOK, CT

TOWN OF WESTBROOK

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Transportation Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 2300
Hartford, CT 06106

RE: *Governor's Bill No. 5055, AN ACT DECREASING WAIT TIMES AT THE DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES*

Gentlemen,

The Town of Westbrook requests that the following testimony regarding *Governor's Bill No. 5055, AN ACT DECREASING WAIT TIMES AT THE DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES*, be introduced into the record.

We generally support the intent of the bill to reduce waiting times at the Department of Motor Vehicles, specifically Section 1 that would allow the Commissioner to enter into agreements with private contractors to issue duplicate licenses and identity cards pursuant to section 14-50a, renew licenses, renew identity cards issued pursuant to section 1-1h and conduct registration transactions at its office facilities.

However, we are greatly concerned regarding the potential impact of Section 5, which states that Subsection (c) of section 14-34a of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July 1, 2016):

(c) Notwithstanding any such agreement or plan, (1) any such commercial vehicle garaged at any fixed location or which leaves from and returns to one or more points within this state in the normal course of operations, shall be taxable in this state as personal property in the town where such vehicle is garaged; and (2) registration shall be denied any such vehicle if any personal property taxes are unpaid with respect to such vehicle, as provided in section 14-33; (3) any such vehicle based in this state shall be subject to the provisions of sections 14-12, as amended by this act, 14-15, 14-15a, 14-16a and chapter 247.

We interpret the highlighted section to mean that the DMV will renew a vehicle registration even if personal property taxes have not been paid. In the current fiscal year, the Town of Westbrook expects to collect \$1,175,000 in personal property taxes on motor vehicles. Motor vehicles, unlike real property, can be removed from the town and moved to another town or out of state, without notice. The one truly effective collection tool we have is for the DMV to deny a registration to an owner who is delinquent in their personal property tax on a motor vehicle. Our tax collector estimates that perhaps

10% of the owners do not pay their taxes on motor vehicles on time and without the DMV's denial of a registration for that reason, this would have an extremely adverse effect on our total tax collections. It would also impose a costly burden on the tax office to pursue delinquent tax payers, including attorney fees, court fees and sheriff fees. In addition, once motor vehicle owners realize there is no consequence to not paying their taxes, the incidence of delinquency can only go up.

We ask that you not support this proposed legislation, particularly in light of the other reductions in state aid to municipalities in the coming fiscal year. Thank you.

Andrew Urban
Director of Finance

Cc: Board of Selectmen
Board of Finance
Representative Jesse MacLachlan
Representative Devin Carney
Senator Art Linares
Betsy Gara, Executive Director, COST